

## Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 5549

DEPARTMENT: PASS AFRICAN POSTS AS APPROPRIATE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CB, XA, UN, PFOR

SUBJ: KHMER QUESTION: AFRICAN VOTING

1. SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE DISCUSSED AFRICAN PERFORMANCE ON KHMER QUESTION, WHICH WAS RESOLVED DEC 5 IN FAVOR OF GKR BY NARROWLY-ADOPTED LIBERIAN MOTION TO ADJOURN (DEFER) MATTER UNTIL 29TH GA. PRESSURE FOR NON-ALIGNED/AFRICAN SOLIDARITY IN SUPPORT OF SIHANOUK WAS VERY HEAVY, TWENTY-THREE AF DELEGATIONS VOTED AGAINST ADJOURNMENT MOTION; SIX AFRICANS ABSTAINED, SIX WERE ABSENT AND FIVE SUPPORTED MOTION.  
END SUMMARY.

2. AFRICAN VOTING PATTERN ON LIBERIAN MOTION DEC 5 TO ADJOURN CONSIDERATION OF CAMBODIAN ITEM UNTIL 29TH UNGA WAS, TAKEN AS A WHOLE, HIGHLY UNFAVORABLE TO KHMER AND US POSITION. DESPITE INTENSIVE LOBBYING IN NEW YORK AND IN AFRICAN CAPITALS, ONLY FIVE AFRICAN DELS (SIX COUNTING SOUTH AFRICA) SUPPORTED THE LIBERIAN MOTION. THESE WERE: LIBERIA, GHANA, IVORY COAST, MALAWI AND LESOTHO. TWENTY-THREE AFRICAN STATES VOTED AGAINST THE MOTION. THERE WERE 6 ABSTENTIONS (ETHIOPIA, KENYA, MOROCCO, NIGERIA, SIERRA LEONE AND  
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SWAZILAND). SIX AFRICAN DELS WERE "ABSENT" (BOTSWANA, GAMBIA, MAURITIUS, RWANDA, TOGO AND TUNISIA). (GAMBIA'S ABSENCE SUBJECT SEPTTEL. MAURITIUS PERMREP, WHO WITHOUT FULLY COMPETENT ALTERNATE, WAS IN CAPITAL, SO THIS WAS NOT SAME

"POLITICAL ABSENCE" AS OTHERS).

3. THE CAMBODIAN REPRESENTATION ITEM IS AN ISSUE OF LITTLE INHERENT INTEREST OR IMPORTANCE TO THE AFRICANS, WHICH MAKES THEIR SUPPORT FOR SIHANOUK, AND RESISTANCE TO OUR STRONG REPRESENTATIONS ALL THE MORE SURPRISING. IN OUR OPINION AFRICAN SUPPORT FOR THE GRUNK RESULTED FROM (A) THE RESPECT AND AFFECTION FOR SIHANOUK FELT BY MANY AFRICAN LEADERS, PARTICULARLY FROM THE FRANCOPHONE STATES, WHICH MADE UP THE BULK OF THE GRUNK SUPPORTERS (16 OF 23 VOTES); (B) ANTI-IMPERIALIST, ANTI-WESTERN SENTIMENT ON AN ISSUE MANY VIEWED IN THOSE TERMS; AND ANTI-AMERICANISM, PARTLY RESULTING FROM UNDERLYING RESENTMENT OF U.S. POWER AND WEALTH, BUT EXACERBATED BY OUR RECENT UN. VOTING RECORD ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN RELATED ISSUES; AND (C) GENUINE COMMITMENT TO PRINCIPLE OF NONALIGNED SOLIDARITY, AND TO DECISIONS ADOPTED BY ALGIERS CONFERENCE. THESE FACTORS ARE INTER-RELATED AND IT IS DIFFICULT TO PLACE THEM IN ANY ORDER OF IMPORTANCE. WHAT IS FAIRLY CERTAIN IS THAT EACH FACTOR CONTRIBUTED TO THE 23 AFRICAN VOTES AGAINST DEFERMENT.

4. AT LEAST SEVERAL AFRICAN STATES WERE DISTURBED BY FAR-REACHING IMPACT OF PRO-SIHANOUK RESOLUTION, AND HAD REAL PROBLEMS TRANSFERRING THEIR POSITION AT ALGIERS INTO A VOTE AT UNGA TO SEAT SIHANOUK AND EJECT GKR DEL. THEY REALIZED THAT IT IS ONE THING TO PASS HORTATORY RESOLUTION IN ALGIERS; IT IS QUITE ANOTHER FOR UNGA TO DICTATE WHO SHOULD REPRESENT A PARTICULAR STATE IN UN. FOR THIS REASON, NUMBER OF AFRICAN STATES INITIALLY SAW DEFERRAL MOTION AS EASY WAY OUT. UNFORTUNATELY, BY THE TIME LIBERIA MOVED FOR ADJOURNMENT, THIS TECHNICALLY PROCEDURAL VOTE WAS SEEN BY MANY AS VOTE ON SUBSTANCE, WHICH THEY THUS FELT BOUND TO OPPOSE, OR AT BEST TO ABSTAIN ON, AS MOST DID.

5. BY WEEK BEFORE VOTE, WHEN WORD OF PROBABILITY OF PRO-GKR DEFERRAL TACTIC ALREADY CIRCULATING, SIHANOUK SUPPORTERS HAD BEGUN TO REGISTER OPPOSITION. MORE ACTIVE SIHANOUK LOBBYISTS  
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WERE ALGERIA, CHINA, SENEGAL AND YUGOSLAVIA. IN CORRIDORS BEFORE DEBATE OPENED, ON DEBATE'S OPENING DAY IN CORRIDORS AND IN FORMAL STATEMENTS, AND ESPECIALLY ON DEBATE'S SECOND AND FINAL DAY, THE OPPOSITION SHARPLY INTENSIFIED DIRECT AND AGGRESSIVE LOBBYING AGAINST DEFEREMENT. PRESSURES WERE MANIFESTLY VERY GREAT INDEED, AND WE WERE AWARE, AS WE MOVED TOWARD SHOWDOWN HOUR, OF SERIOUS SLIPPAGE IN SUPPORT FOR OUR MOTION. ONE SIGNAL WAS THAT SEVERAL DELS THAT HAD RECENTLY REASSURED US OF SUPPORT WERE NOWHERE TO BE FOUND.

6. WE, ASIAN ON KHMER LOBBYISTS EARLIER HAD APPARENTLY FIRM COMMITMENTS TO SUPPORT LIBERIAN MOTION FROM ETHIOPIA, KENYA, MOROCCO, SIERRA LEONE AND SWAZILAND. THESE COUNTRIES ABSTAINED. THREE

OTHER DELS (BOTSWANA, RWANDA AND TUNISIA) THAT HAD REASSURED US THEY WOULD SUPPORT MOTION DID NOT VOTE. BOTSWANA'S PERMREP MOGAMI DID NOT COME TO UN AT ALL THAT DAY, THOUGH HE TOLD HIS OFFICE HE WOULD BE THERE, AND HIS STAFF IN UNGA COMMITTEES ASSURED US THAT HE WAS. RWANDA PERMREP NKUNDABAGENZI ALSO DISAPPEARED WITHOUT TELLING ANYONE WHERE HE WAS. RWANDAN DELOFF IN SECOND COMMITTEE AT FIRST PROMISED TO APPEAR IN PLENARY, IF NECESSARY, TO TAKE PART IN VOTE. AT CRUCIAL MOMENT, HOWEVER, HE REFUSED TO DO SO. WHEN TUNISIA WAS CALLED DURING VOTE, NO ONE ANSWERED, ALTHOUGH AMBASSADOR DRISS SAT LARGE AS LIFE IN HIS SEAT.

7. IN ADDITION, UPPER VOLTA PERMREP HAD GIVEN INDICATION OF STRONG SUPPORT FOR DEFERRAL BUT HIS REPRESENTATIVE ACTUALLY VOTED AGAINST. ZAIRE DEL, QUESTIONED EARLIER IN DAY, WAS ALMOST ABUSIVE IN RESPONDING TO OUR INQUIRY ABOUT ZAIRE'S POSITION. JUST BEFORE OPENING OF VOTE, ZAIRE'S SEAT WAS VACANT, AT LAST MOMENT ZAIRE DELOFF APPEARED IN HALL AND CAST NEGATIVE VOTE.

8. ONE SIGNIFICANT ASPECT OF VOTE WAS THAT CALL FOR NONALIGNED SOLIDARITY DID NOT PREVENT SIGNIFICANT DEFECTIONS INTO ABSTENTION AND EVEN SUPPORT OF DEFERMENT. WE BELIEVE THAT FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF REASONS THIS OCCURED:

A) THE NONALIGNED THEMSELVES WRE DEEPLY DIVIDED ON THE ISSUE WITH THEIR MEMBERS MOST DIRECTLY CONCERNED, THE EAST ASIANS, OPPOSED TO THE PRO-SIHANOUK PROPOSAL. HAD THE ISSUE BEEN SEEN SOLELY IN TERMS OF GREAT POWER (U.S) VS. NONALIGNED, THE RESULT WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY DIFFERENT.

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B) AN AFRICAN STATE-LIBERIA-TOOK LEAD IN PROPOSING MOTION OF ADJOURNMENT. AMB. BARNES OF LIBERIA DESERVES VERY HIGH MARKS INDEED FOR HIS COURAGE. (SO, AS A MATTER OF FACT, DO FOUR OTHER AFRICAN STATES WHO HELD OUT FOR POSITIVE VOTE. WE KNOW THAT AMB. BOATEN OF GHANA WAS SUBJECT TO VERY SEVERE LAST-MINUTE PRESSURES TOO, AND WE ASSUME THAT OTHER DELS HAD SIMILAR EXPERIENCE.) BARNES WAS UNDER INTENSIVE PRESSURES AND WAS CONCERNED TO LAST MINUTE ABOUT ALIENATING MANY OF THE NON-ALIGNED WHO WERE SCHEDULED TO SPEAK AND WOULD BE CUT OFF IF DEFERRAL MOTION PASSED. YET HE HELD OUT, PERHAPS EVEN EXCEEDING HIS INSTRUCTIONS FROM MONROVIA.

C) ONE ACCIDENT OF VOTING PROCEDURE CONTRIBUTED HELPFULLY: SINCE ALPHABETICAL VOTING STARTED WITH GREECE, FIRST FIVE AFRICAN VOTES INCLUDED THREE "YES", ONE ABSTENTION AND ONLY ONE "NO". THIS PRESUMABLY MADE IT EASIER FOR OTHER AFRICANS TO ABSTAIN.

D) NATURE OF ISSUE WAS ALSO VERY IMPORTANT IN THIS CASE. MOST AFRICANS AGREE IN PRINCIPLE ON IMPORTANCE OF ARTICLE 2, PARA 7 OF CHARTER-DOMESTIC JURISDICTION CLAUSE. MANY HAD EXPRESSED SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT PRECEDENT VOTE WOULD SET FOR DISSIDENTS IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES WHO COULD LATER CLAIM TO BE LEGITIMATE VOICE. WE SUSPECT THAT PRO-KHMER SPEECHES DURING DEBATE-WHICH STRESSED THIS POINT-HAD

SOME EFFECT. THUS (AS SEEMED RARELY THE CASE THIS YEAR)  
MERITS OF ISSUE HAD SOME BEARING UPON VOTE. WE BELIEVE,  
IN FACT, THAT VERY MANY AFRICAN STATES, INCLUDING SOME WHO  
OPPOSED KHMER POSITION, ARE RELIEVED THAT ISSUE HAS BEEN  
SIDESTEPED. WE ARE LESS CERTAIN, HOWEVER, THAT THIS  
QUESTION OF PRINCIPLE WOULD HAVE HAD SUCH IMPORTANCE IF  
SUBSTANTIVE PRO-SIHANOUK RESOLUTION ITSELF HAD COME TO VOTE.

9. WITH RESPECT TO AFRICA, MOST SIGNIFICANT FACT FOR US IS  
THAT SUBSTANTIAL MAJORITY OF AFRICAN STATES VOTED AGAINST  
U.S. ON ISSUE THEY KNEW OF IMPORTANCE TO U.S. AND OF LITTLE  
DIRECT CONCERN TO THEM. OUR SIDE PREVAILED, FOR THE MOMENT,  
BECAUSE WE WERE ABLE TO ADD MINORITY OF NONALIGNED (AND AFRICAN)  
VOTES TO FAIRLY SOLID SUPPORT FROM L.A. AND WEO'S.  
BENNETT

NOTE BY OCT: NOT PASSED.  
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## Message Attributes

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